/2 cont./

562 [842] The father hopes that his first-born will be a boy, as he sees in him a future helper in herding tasks and a companion on long trips. The maternal family also desires that the first-born be a son because, although he does not hereafter increase the family, beoause of /the system of/ matrilinear descent, he does contribute to its prestige, as on the number of males depends the family prestige and influence, since it is they who represent it in situations of conflict with other groups and who, because of this prestige, make it possible for their relatives to live a more peaceful life by checking the misbehavior of members of other groups with the women of their group, maintaining the peaceful equilibrium of the conjugal life and preserving a mutual respect for the rights and duties of both sides.

Furthermore, on their importance depends, indirectly, the maintenance of their womenfolks' social standing, as no other Guajiro /3/ would become involved in acts of violation or seduction against them for fear of reprisal. Their daughters, rather, will be bought by men of their own social rank, which would eliminate the possibility of their being lowered. Also, should a relative die, the indemnity is more certain, for fear that the group might impose payment and justice by its own might.

However, the male members always present difficulties. The women of the group are always bound by the conduct of the men, for whatever illegal act is committed against another group affects them directly as reprisals are directed against them. On the other hand, when it becomes known that the men [579] are foregathering, the women must be near by, because the men overindulge in rum and under its influence become aggressive and give free rein to their dislikes and hatreds. The women's role then is to try to keep arguments from degenerating into wrangling and bloodshed by endeavoring prudently to patch up such difficulties as they develop.

[583] Furthermore, although it is true that male economic help is the greater in cases where the group requires mutual

/3 cont./
562 co-operation, it is also true that their marriages demand heavy
583 disbursements from everyone, not only in animals but in jewelry -- gold ornaments -- which a man's female relatives give him to be handed over to his future wife as a sign of the engagement. Also, the children of a man's marriage are not his in our sense of the word, so that in spite of the expense borne by the family, it does not become strengthened by the increase. All the children belong to the maternal family group according to Guajiro law.

842 The wife concurs with her husband in hoping that her first child will be a son but thereafter hopes for a large family of girls, who will enrich and increase the family group to which they belong with children and marriage payments, for a woman
811 in Guajiro society has no less importance than a man, as it is she who transmits relationship and, therefore, increases with her offspring the number of consanguineous relatives. In the woman rest the hopes of her relatives for indemnification for the care they gave her in her youth and the maintenance of her social rank, because, on being bought, the eldest daughter indemnifies her father and his family for the expenses they had in livestock and ornaments in buying her mother. The others, with their marriage payments, increase the maternal income and, to a certain extent, augment with this sum the economic backing for future children and for the support of the husband, and form a nest egg to help should any difficult situation of their own or of their family /4/ arise. Moreover, as women have lately been
797 improving the technique of their handwork by the instruction they receive in the Capuchin mission, and these articles are readily sold in the markets of the interior as well as in the neighboring markets of Valledupar and Maracaibo, the woman really constitutes an important economic force that helps to overcome the precarious financial situation in the home, which is aggravated by the intensely hot summers which do not permit all-season agricultural activity and weaken the livestock. With the revenue so obtained she supports her husband, feeds and clothes herself, her children, and her close relatives.

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885 as an adult man in his group, it is probably marriage which definitively gives him his passport of citizenship, if we may so express it, as this includes not only the biological act of a physical coming of age and its legal recognition, but it also carries with it an interesting social aspect in that the Guajiro who contracts marriage, if it is true that he then reaches the maximum expression of freedom, must, on his part, pay back in his behavior and usefulness to society some of what he possesses through it. In other words, his personality is definitively formed, and he is considered a member fully entitled to all rights, but with the obligation to comply fully with all those duties which up to that moment had been gradually meted out to him, according to his age.

583 885 And in order to marry, the man must comply with a series of social and legal requisites traditionally established, which lead him to contract long-term obligations with all his relatives and with society in general, obligations which restrain that freedom of action longed for in his youth and which constrain him to depend more and more on his family and the group. If, for example, he has had to ask for assistance in order to pay for his wife, he takes on as a result legal obligations with all his relatives and friends who helped him, obligations which will never end throughout his life. Upon getting married, furthermore, if it is true that he will be considered an able member capable of surviving economically by himself, the advice that his father gives him on handing over his livestock shows him that although he will have backing in the family, he must have recourse to all his forces in order to attend to his sustenance and the fulfillment of his matrimonial duties: "Now you are married and must make your own home; you have to be a different man from now on. You can't laze around but must carefully watch your animals and those of your wife and administer everything she has. You must put up the fence round your corn field to help maintain your wife and your children. You must be a man and not a lazybones now that you are married."

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583 885 The married man is the head of a new cell, and this implies family and social obligations. These he must face up to as a head of a family under peril of loss of prestige and lowering of position. With the coming of children his position becomes more and more extended, as his duties and rights are becoming joined and broadened, for to the obligations of a husband are added those of a father. And these are further complicated on contracting marriages with new women, as then he has reached, according to the Guajiro way of thinking, the maximum development of his male personality.

581 562 Valuation of virginity and of the woman. The value of the Guajiro woman is fixed by the marriage payment, that is to say, it is the economic assessment of her worth. The conditions of this valuation, traditional among the upper classes (as the lower classes have lost them through socio-economic conditions which even influence those of some standing), may be summarized thus:

581 832 The physical qualities which make a Guajiro woman desirable are those that comply with the traditional aesthetic norm and are those that the woman after her seclusion (Cf. Initiation of Young Women) makes every endeavor to acquire at any cost: tall stature, balanced by well distributed flesh which gives her an appearance of robustness and full-bodiedness, so that when walking decked out in her ample clothes, she has an appearance both elegant and majestic; wide and robust hips (probably with an unconscious biological end in mind, or a sexual one, or a combination of both); small and upright breasts, as the opposite is considered almost repulsive; and, above all, firm flesh. This last is probably the most desired quality, as the man openly confesses that when his woman over the years loses it, he replaces her by another one who has it. The shape of the legs has no importance, probably because with the full, long dress they are out of sight. In the main, they are thin in relation to the body and frequently bowlegged /?cascorvas/.

/63 cont./

581 The Indian also values the relatives of his future wife, be-
593 cause if she has rich relatives and he pays well for her, these will feel themselves obliged to supply her and her children with means of subsistence to live, freeing him from a responsibility which would otherwise restrict his freedom. /64/

To marry into an economically strong group has the advantage that this will bring to the marriage a dowry fitting his esteem, which the future husband will administer, as well as a series of gifts which the women's relatives will make to his children, and, what will increase his prestige, the number of ornaments, dresses, etc., which she will bring with her and in which she will appear in due time. Furthermore, although his marrying one of these women implies a heavy disbursement at the moment, in the long run he will receive suitable reimbursement with the payment for his first daughter to be bought, which belongs in full to the father.

584 Neither does the man disregard the social value of the
583 woman, above all in his first marriage, which is the one that represents it. By this purchase he and his relatives, as well as those of the girl, try to arrange an alliance which will reinforce two strong families or tighten the bonds between them. This induces them in many cases not to consider the choice of the bride (not so much at present), the elders freely making arrangements, in order to obtain the advantage of a high price, the linking with a group whom they fear, avoiding thus prejudice and strengthening friendship, but at the same time hazarding the possibility of the woman's committing suicide. This same fact is what permits the abduction of a woman, which is not considered such in the wide sense of the word but rather an acquiescence on the part of the woman's relatives, who look complacently on these relations, having confidence in the compliance with the payment on the part of the man. It is a deed which demonstrates good faith on the part of relatives on the woman's side to which the man must respond by arranging an immediate and satisfactory payment, if he does not want to

/64 cont./

584 have a serious stain placed on his prestige as a man in good
583 financial standing and one who complies with Guajiro law. So they test, unconsciously perhaps, the feelings of the two groups who are seeking the alliance: trust on one side and solvency and good faith of the other. It is a test of friendship in which each side puts in evidence the wish of surpassing the other.

555 Also figured in the social valuation of a woman is her knowl-
581 edge of the language as this means in Guajiro that she has
593 palabra /literally, "word"/ (Cf. Caciques), that is to say, that
191 she has a wide knowledge of the language and can use it adequately in delicate situations in which it is necessary to bring to bear every oratorical gift and know how to measure her words and the customary phrases in order to attain her end or to guide the discussion to a level where the facts will follow the legal line. A woman, when she has these qualities, may act as a mediator in a quarrel, and on the result favorable to the person she has represented will depend her personal aggrandizement, by which she acquires prestige and is called in to mediate in even more complicated matters, /65/ by this means increasing her personal position and that of her group and converting other clans into satellites, submissive to her will, in payment for benefits received, thus still further increasing her power which indirectly extends to her husband. This acquisition is a cause for vanity and pride in the husband.

From this talent of tener palabra /literally, "to have word"/ there emerges a series of sequences which build up the social aspect of a home. A woman who possesses that quality knows the Guajiro social protocol and can fully comply with it, thus avoiding conflicts with other groups; she also knows the legal system of the peninsula and by such knowledge can protect the interests of her family group, including her husband, as she will confine his conduct to that which is established, which eases the husband's life and his relationships with his feminine relatives. She makes possible the knitting together of these two disparate elements and creates the bond of union between the

/65 cont./

555 two; she increases the man's prestige because in carrying out her
581 duties as mistress of his house and representative of the home,
593 she knows by suitable attentions (agreeable talk, preparation of food according to traditional custom, hospitality appropriate to the social standing of a guest, etc.) how to win everybody's appreciation, consideration, and respect.

Furthermore, as the maintenance of prestige rests partly on the wife, the knowledge of the psychic and legal life and customs of the society in which she lives enables her to act correctly and without errors. She will maintain due solemnity in carrying out the most important acts in life, as, for example: the seclusion of young women, marriage, illness, etc., so strengthening her status. She will also rule her family more correctly and constitute herself the guardian of tradition, which is so respected by the Guajiro and in which resides the strength of their culture.

* * *

● 583 The price that the Guajiro man pays for his wife includes
836 several conditions among which is the assumed virginity as he will expect his wife to come to the marriage as such each time that marriage penetrates into his psychic life, and he will feel defrauded if she does not, so much more if the status of the bride is high and even more if she is his first wife.

The man takes into account various aspects of virginity:
[554] First, he finds a special attractiveness in the virgin woman for the satisfaction of deflowering her, which, apart from the sexual attractiveness, gives him in the future a reason for boasting and prestige, the halo of a fortunate man which /66/ fills him with pride and gives him a feeling of superiority. Second, and from the economic point of view, because he has paid the price asked, convinced that his wife is a property which belongs to him, wholly and exclusively. Third, because he thinks that if a woman has given herself to another man, secretly, it was because she was drawn to him by a great affection or because she is a

/66 cont./

583 836 cabeza loco /madcap/, according to the Guajiro expression, two things which he cannot bring himself to accept: the first, because he considers that having paid for his wife, she should belong to him from years back and the thought that someone else has possessed her makes him feel that he has been defrauded in his payment; the second, because he fears this may repeat itself in the future and conjugal fidelity will be doubtful when he is away on his duties as a nomadic herdsman. This doubt, in time, becomes an obsession, and it sows difficulties in their matrimonial relations, because the uneasiness of the man may explode when least expected for any cause that fires his passion of jealousy. He is always jealous of someone, and he fills his life permanently with questions, suspicions, precautions, and traps, in the attempt to discover who was his predecessor, whose name the woman will hide with the same zeal that he shows in trying to find it out. This doubt even reaches his children, because the man feels he has no certainty of his paternity. He spies on every small detail about his wife in her behavior with the men he is acquainted with, to learn if one of them could be the father; he checks minutely the physical appearance of his child, his gestures, his expressions, to see if he can find any similarity to someone he knows, also consulting the opinion of others in order to get that peace of mind he so much desires in himself.

If the man should confirm that the woman has belonged successively to several men, he asks the return of his payment, or he abandons her after humiliating her to compensate himself for his inner suffering.

Generally, the man on confirming that the woman he has bought is not a virgin immediately presents his claim for compensation payment to her relatives. Initially he informs the father (among the mestizos) or the closest maternal uncle. The claim for compensation payment demands the immediate return of half of the property given in payment for the woman, as this amount is the evaluation of the extent of the fraud which has been practiced on his spirit and his pocket, the rest being left as payment for his future cohabitation with her. With this reimbursement

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583 836 the man feels satisfied, because the price paid included, tacitly, her virginity. If the woman's relatives do not handle the situation prudently, reprisals and hostilities may take place between the two groups. Also in these cases the man will claim the necklace which he gave the woman as a sign of their betrothal the day the marriage was arranged. But he does not do this with an eye to gain but to make the woman suffer some part of the humiliation /67/ he himself felt on learning of the deception. Furthermore, as the necklace is a sign of engagement, asking for its return resembles an act of breaking it, although, in point of fact, the woman continues to be tied to the man with matrimonial obligations.

At times the man will follow another norm of conduct, especially at the present time when this state of affairs occurs more frequently and the claims for compensation payment for this condition are losing importance: He himself assumes the punishment for the deception. He roughly inquires of the woman: "Why are you not a virgin when I bought you believing that you were? Why don't you say who possessed you before I did?" He goes from insult to action and beats the woman, who, recognizing her inferior situation does not dare to protest.

It is possible that the Indian will not at first go beyond insulting the woman in private, but under the influence of alcohol the [152] resentment grows out of hand, and it is then that, in the presence of his friends, he will recount his problem and complain. Not content with this, he makes up songs referring to the subject which contain insulting commentaries and will sing them to his wife when with his friends to humiliate her in front of them and so obtain some satisfaction for what he personally suffers. In this [578] state of drunkenness it is not uncommon that he will beat his wife, shielding himself from reproach by the fact that as he has not been repaid the part of the marriage payment due him, her relatives are not in a position to protest.

Often with time the matter gets forgotten, and it only crops up on certain occasions when they quarrelsomely bring up all the past with its emotional content, due to some disobedience on the

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583 836 part of the woman, a rough gesture, or a rude answer. Sometimes the matter is settled by the woman's being abandoned.

If the woman divulges the name of the man who originally possessed her, or if it is learned by some means, the husband will present his claim for compensation for abuse, because the one who enjoyed her, without payment, made use of something which belonged to him by act and right of purchase.

[587] The economic valuation of virginity can be confirmed by the fact that a widow who refuses to live in marital life with the maternal nephews of her late husband must pay a sum equal to that paid for her by her husband, less a discount for not now being a virgin. Also, when a woman has committed adultery, the husband has to be compensated for the offense received, and a payment is then made which is less than that for which the woman was bought, as a discount equivalent to the value put on her virginity is allowed, it being supposed that this existed at the time of her marriage. /68/

The Guajiro woman who is not a virgin and is about to be bought generally prefers, in consideration of the consequences, to inform her future husband of the facts. She tells him: "I warn you I am not a maiden, but if you truly care for me you have to buy me as I am. I tell you this beforehand so you can think it over and not throw it up to me afterward, seeing that I am not deceiving you." The woman is forced to make this confession in view of what might occur later when her lie is found out. Nevertheless, she will suffer much uncertainty as she has to face this dilemma: To tell the man offering to buy her and thereby expose herself to the possibility that he will withdraw, disillusioned and goaded by the desire to find out who had done such a thing and whether she would be faithful to him in their married life, and, furthermore, exposing herself to the danger that he might divulge her "secret" on a day of heavy drinking, by which her prestige before everyone would be wrecked and no man would come forward to buy her for a wife; or not tell him and suffer the consequences. However, it sometimes happens that the man reacts to

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583 836 the situation in a different manner. He says: "The past does not matter to me. I suppose he did not cut out your organ." In this way the woman gets tranquilly married, and the husband, aware of the facts, makes no later claims, though it may happen that the price paid is lower, although this is not usual, as the man in recognition of the woman's confession shows a generous attitude.

In the case when the woman who is about to be bought has received payment for abuse, the man takes into account the intervention of the maternal family who saw to it that the feminine elements of the group were respected, which proves to him that it is a family group that insists on the law being complied with and for this reason has sufficient prestige and masculine elements to enforce it and is a group that, because of the payment he will make, will look after the security and stability of his marriage. Also, the knowledge of every one of the details of what happened (violation or marriage not carried out because of the nonpayment of the second payment) is an adequate palliative which excuses, to the Indian's way of thinking, what has occurred and does not constitute a deception or an economic or moral fraud.

[684] When in consequence of premarital relations a pregnancy has resulted, the man who causes it must pay for the birth in addition to the abuse, in accordance with Guajiro tradition: a number of animals to the mother or the immediate relatives for the troubles of pregnancy and for the birth itself, which includes the pain suffered and the blood lost. If this woman is later bought, an amount is deducted from the payment, which tacitly amounts to the value of her virginity, already paid for in the sum given for the abuse. It can, however, occur, and in effect it does occur, that the man /69/ ignores the past when he has a special affection or feels greatly attracted by the woman, in which case he pays the price asked without the afore-mentioned discount.

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SV8 177 Furthermore, doing away with marriage by payment destroys with it the family backing which, in the economic sense, means as much to the woman, the man, and the children as to the maternal relatives through the system of payments, repayments, and compensations that are consequent on it. Above all, the woman loses the social and economic backing of her group, and the man the guarantee of her fidelity.

The woman who has migrated and has taken to this way of life while outside her native land, or who has accepted it in her own homeland, usually will not return to the country, or if she does it is only to live there while she spends the money she has earned, to return later and resume her trade. Today prostitution is a menace to all La Guajira. Young Indians who have not been able to obtain a wife or simply anyone who wants sexual satisfaction will find it with a Guajiro woman by means of a casual payment, and with prostitution has come a new scourge for the Guajiro: [164] venereal diseases, brought and spread by those who have acquired it in their relations with the civilizados. Ignorance on the part of the prostitute of hygienic precepts which would free her from these ills has resulted in the disease increasing dangerously. [165] Moreover, there exists in the peninsula no clinic where the native can go for treatment, and there is only one doctor and a poorly equipped hospital in Uribía. Hence, prostitution has aided, and still aids, not only social bankruptcy by the wreck of the institution of the family but also physical degeneration by the unrestricted spreading of venereal diseases among the youth of the country.

583 Outfit and dowry of the woman. When a Guajiro woman is bought the family gives her the inheritance, in livestock, which is hers by right. These gifts go to her in accordance with her social standing and with the amount of the marriage payment, because this establishes the prestige of the maternal relatives. They know that a man who has paid dearly for his wife expects that she has not cost so much just for the sake of the marital satisfactions she may give him, or for her known high social status, but that in her price there will be included an inheritance handed over to the bride for life and at this time. He could not

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583 understand that she would have such a price for only the two things mentioned, and if the woman were not well dowered with livestock and jewels, he would pass the word around among his friends with detriment to the prestige of the girl's relatives, that she, his wife, cost a high price but had nothing, which is equivalent in Guajiro society to a fraud, as we know that the traditional norm of social conduct is based on each group surpassing the other. For this reason the maternal relatives /80/ of the bride take up a combined collection of livestock, in order to present it and numerous jewels and dresses, so that in this way she may appear before her husband without loss of prestige when compared with his relatives. These gifts she receives from her maternal uncles, and the jewelry, usually, is presented to her by her maternal aunts and female cousins.

The care of these animals generally is the responsibility of the husband. He pastures and looks after them with his own and those of his sons, but it may happen that the wife's relatives, if the husband is a drunkard or spendthrift, will take charge of them personally to avoid mismanagement.

With respect to the household equipment, the only contribution that the husband makes is the hammock, which he buys from the woman's mother, a purchase and which includes as well the right to cohabit with his wife after its purchase. The rest of the household goods are the responsibility of the woman, who at first, as she lives with her relatives, uses their utensils but slowly starts collecting her own for the time when she establishes her own home or when the needs of the growing family oblige her to do so. She buys the pottery, by barter usually, from the pottery makers of Jarara, who at fixed times travel through the peninsula with their goods; she sets up looms and with these makes the hammocks for her children and those required for visitors. For the rest of the utensils, simple as they are, she uses coconut shells and gourds, with which she makes plates, bowls, spoons, tobacco containers, etc. She and her daughters make bags by different processes, using imported

/80 cont./

583 thread or spinning and dyeing cotton. They bring in logs, which serve as seats, they make the harness for the burros and horses. In other words, in some places the woman tries to become self-sufficient, and in other places, according to the established division of labor, she sells whatever she makes and with the proceeds buys the food, clothes, and utensils she may need in the home; or more simply she relies on barter to gain her object.

583 177 The problem is different in the case of mestizos, if the marriage is not carried out under Guajiro law, and in that of whites who have married Guajiro women in accordance with the rite established for the community. In both cases the man provides, besides the house, all that is essential for the home such as furniture and domestic utensils according to the custom of civilizados /nonnatives/, and later, as they wear out, he substitutes new ones. With respect to the dowry, we may say that the man may take charge of his wife's animals, if she so wishes, but he may not arbitrarily dispose /81/ of them. The capital acquired between them is the inheritance of their children, as we have seen. It does not devolve, as in Guajiro practice, to its original source (the wife's maternal relatives). Since he did not make a marriage payment, it is up to the man to shoulder the responsibility and provide for all the necessities of the home. /83/ /page 82 is blank/

V

MARRIAGE

583 436 Purchase procedure. The traditional Guajiro marriage is brought into being through the purchase of the woman from her maternal relatives, payment being made in animals and ornaments and, at the present time, in bolivars because of the influence of trade with Venezuela.

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583 Generally, the girl's family is advised by the suitor's relatives that they will come to buy her. The man, on his part, has requested his most influential maternal uncle, or one who is considered a "cacique," to go in company with his mother and other friends to arrange the purchase of the girl of his choice. They arrive dressed in their best and receive the most generous hospitality from the girl's relatives. They hand over as a sign of the engagement the so-called "prendas /"ornaments"/," which [301] are necklaces of gold set with tuma stones (1), the value and

1. A mineral quartz used as a precious stone.

number of which depend on the economic strength of the suitor, going all the way up to ten in persons of the highest standing, especially when the man is acquiring his first wife, who as we have seen is the principal one.

If the girl's relatives see that the marriage is an advantageous one, they accept the gifts. If they do not accept them, this [578] indicates a definite refusal and rarely occurs, since it implies contempt which could give rise to serious differences between the groups concerned. Once the necklaces are handed over, the spokesman for the bridegroom offers to buy the girl, and the girl's maternal relative of most authority replies, fixing the price, [554] which generally is equal to that paid by the girl's father for her mother; often they get a higher price, which increases their prestige. They argue for a short time until they arrive at an arrangement between them as to the price and the basis of payment. Then the young man's relatives leave to tell him of the arrangement made, which he respects and accepts without making any kind of objection, and he gets ready to pay the payment agreed upon in order to obtain his wife. /84/.

556 583 Payment in cows. The number of heads of livestock that a man has shows his economic position and through this his status in the family group and in the whole community, because stock

/84 cont./

556 raising is the basic occupation of the Guajiro wherever the soil
583 permits of agriculture during certain times of the year. The worth of a woman is similarly determined. She aspires to be paid for in cows, which show that her physical, spiritual, and social qualities are being adequately paid for, that her traditional rank and the power of her kin is justly valued, that the education that she has received at puberty is appreciated, that her standing as a married woman is going to be maintained adequately, and that her children will have an identical valuation, which means that her social status will be improved.

The Guajiro woman is so eager to be paid for in cows that the lower-class women (we do not know if the higher class do also) resort to an act of magic to help achieve this and, an act consisting of burying their hair when they cut it under cow dung.

583 Ways of paying. Paying for the woman entails the right to take her as a wife and can be effected in the following ways: When the man is rich, he hands over the purchase price in one payment, a sign of personal prestige which indicates his own economic capacity and that of his group, who do not need to make a large payment in installments. This makes the bride's relatives very proud because it shows they have made an alliance with a group of power and prestige.

But the most commonly used system allows two payments: the first, on a day agreed upon before the marriage, and the other, some time later. The first payment, as we have seen, confers the right of matrimony. On the due date the livestock arrive, driven by the servants of the bridegroom's maternal family and accompanied by the uncles who arranged the purchase of the woman. These make a ceremonious handing over of the livestock in order to put their payment on record. Then it is the turn of the bride's maternal relatives to comply with all the duties of hospitality, the warmth of which is in direct relation to the size of the payment and, above all, to their standing. If the bridegroom's relatives arrive early with the livestock, the arégrash (the eldest man of the family) orders a small bull killed

/84 cont./

583 and offers them hospitality in his own house. The small bull, the best of the herd, serves to make a special dish and is also divided among those who have come so that each takes with him a good portion, /85/ the higher the guest's standing the better the piece. In the afternoon they return home. If they come to make the payment in the evening, then the attentions are [273] different. They must have a great quantity of chicha made of masticated corn and yucca, which is accompanied by pieces of meat and bollos /corn rolls/. The bridegroom's companions sleep in the bride's house and leave at dawn after breakfast, for which an animal is slaughtered, the meat of which is distributed among the visitors.

In the first case when women attend, they must each be presented with the gift of a goat or a sheep to take home with them; in both cases there must be an abundant quantity of rum for the men.

The bridegroom does not come at this time either, but when he wants to make the girl his wife, he brings more cattle (ten cows when the girl is of high standing), which he hands over to the mother in payment for the matrimonial hammock; with this payment he has fulfilled the final requirements for access to his bride, who awaits him in a neighboring house, and there they hang up their matrimonial hammock, which serves them as a marriage bed.

Sociological significance of the marriage payment. Through the payment the matrimonial tie is strengthened and its legal organization is passed on to the descendants of the new family [428] cell. Thus the laws of inheritance are structured by it: The man pays for his wife with the co-operation of his relatives, and for this reason the children, who belong to the mother's blood, are deprived of the right to inherit the father's goods at his death, because they are not consanguineous relatives, and, moreover, the mother and her maternal relatives received the purchase price. The children take the surname of their mother, a further [551] proof of their bond with the maternal clan, in which they find all the economic and social backing they need.

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583 Furthermore, the marriage payment includes a compensation for the care the woman received during her life in the family and the obligations that her group will incur in taking charge of the children of the marriage. And in relation to the lands, it permits the husband and his relatives the usufruct of the land belonging to the woman, where from then on they are permitted to pasture their livestock, cultivate the soil, and establish their home. In this way the right over the land of a certain family group is extended to others, and at the same time, the woman's relatives acquire identical rights in respect to the land of the husband and his maternal group; the children they have in the marriage have rights over both. /86/

The payment is also the regulator of conjugal relations and is in a way the yardstick by which the man measures the virginity of the woman when he marries her, on the one hand (cf. Chap. IV, section on Valuation of virginity and of the woman), and on the other, the fidelity to him she must maintain according to Guajiro law.

583 It is in this question of fidelity that the marriage payment
684 plays a predominant part. With the roving life of the Guajiro Indian due to his occupation as a nomadic herder who looks for water and grass for his livestock and now migrates to Venezuela for long periods of time, the assurance of his wife's faithfulness rests on this payment. During his long absences his wife generally lives with her relatives, who feel themselves obliged to watch her surreptitiously and give an account of her conduct to the man, and even more they feel responsible to him for her actions, for if her infidelity is proved, the payment must be returned to him who paid it to them, confident in the honor of his wife and counting on the backing of his in-laws. This prevents all right of protest from them and requires immediate and effective repayment, for otherwise the offended husband might kill his wife's lover, and with that the relatives of the guilty woman would find themselves involved in a death compensation payment since she was the cause. In such a case the maternal relatives of the adulterous

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583 684 woman are at the mercy of the offended husband's demands: return of the animals he gave as payment for the woman and the giving up of the children conceived in the marriage, plus an additional payment as compensation for the insult received. As the children belong to the maternal relatives, to have them taken away is a terrible disgrace, and for this he /the injured husband/ accepts in lieu of them further indemnification in animals, and they hand over one /of the children/.

583 The payment made for the woman also serves as a controlling factor on the general conduct of the wife, preventing her from leaving her home and obligations while her husband is away.

On the other hand, the payment regulates the relations of the man to the woman, because if he subjects her to bad treatment, and this treatment forces her to leave him, then the man is dispossessed of his right over her, because she cannot be obliged to live with him if he has made her life unbearable, and furthermore neither does it give him the right to present a claim for compensation payment for her leaving her home and obligations, which in the other case, as we have seen, implies the return of the amount handed over for her purchase.

The payment that the man makes to the woman's maternal relatives gives him a proprietary right over her as if she were /87/ chattel, in a way, because if, for example, the woman is coveted by another man who wants to buy her, the two -- husband and would-be-buyer -- may come to some arrangement, through intermediaries (if the woman is not of a high class or a first wife) to make a deal, the husband, in exchange for the wife, receiving a payment which is nearly always less than he gave for her originally, taking into consideration the use he has made of her in sexual relations and the children they have had. This second husband may sell her to a third, and so on successively. This usually occurs when a married woman goes off with somebody and lives with him, in view of which the husband resolves to make a claim against the lover, who, accepting it, accepts also the transference of the right of a legitimate spouse. This system,

/87 cont./

583 then, allows the transference of a woman from one man to another like any domestic animal and also the easy conversion of an illegal relationship to a legal one by paying for the woman.

But where the payment plays the most important social part
583 -- if we consider the different social classes found in La Guajira
565 -- is in the fixing of the social status of each woman and her descendants.

The status of a clan group rests on the marriage value of its women. This valuation dates back to distant times and has been transmitted from mother to daughter. For this reason the Guajiro when speaking of the price of a woman says: A free Guajiro woman is worth as much as her mother cost, and the latter had the same price as her grandmother. This is why payment for a woman has such enormous importance in her life and why, when she comes out of seclusion, all her attention and interest is concentrated on one thing: to be bought well, which amounts to finding someone who values her as she should be valued. It is also for this reason that white people cannot understand the pride with which a Guajiro woman relates that she was bought very dearly or that more cows were given for her than for some other woman. In the number of these heads of livestock is the valuation of her standing and the recognition that she belongs to the rich Guajiro class of better status. Hence she resorts to every kind of magic within her power to be bought well, to find a man who, paying for her what was paid for her mother, establishes her status, or paying even more, he being rich, raises her standing immediately by recognizing her personal qualities which make her worthy of such an increase; for if a woman cannot be bought (in normal times in her clan group) for less than the price paid for her mother, she can, on the contrary improve her standing through a higher price. In this way, the daughters born to the couple will be more expensive; that is to say, their status will have advanced as compared with /88/ that of their grandmother; and the man, if it is true that he has made an investment greater than he was legally obliged to, has increased his prestige, by having acquired

/88 cont./

583 for himself a woman who was worth so much; also his outlay will
565 be compensated by the payment he will receive for the first daughter who marries, which will be identical with what he paid for her mother.

583 Another interesting point is the regulating aspect the payment has on the moral and social conduct of a woman before marriage, since it obliges her indirectly to accept and comply with all the determined ethical and social norms, without which her value as a future wife would go down. For example, when the woman belongs to a high class, she must not accept proposals to elope with a man who loves her but who lacks sufficient money to buy her. This is allowed, however, in women of a lower social class who have no standing to lose, where there is not sufficient force to back the claims their relatives might make, and where their value as wives is not constant but varies, depending almost always on the financial capacity of the buyer and very often on the economic situation at the moment. In summer /the dry season/, for example, things get so bad in these lower classes that a woman can be bought for a little corn.

582 These facts give rise to a certain stabilization of the existing difference of status, for the women of high class can only be bought by men of the same or better position, which limits in this way the possibilities of acquiring a rich woman and prevents high-class family groups being mixed with poor groups or those of a lesser social standing.

583 A woman who wants to maintain her standing cannot run away with a man and be paid for later. This implies that the man, after a time, if he is not satisfied, can repudiate her for this act alone, paying only for having abused her, which, if of little importance to a woman of low social standing, is definitely very important for one of high standing. Also, if the compensation claim is not met peacefully or if the payment is not made, war may be provoked between her group and that of her husband, and all the consequences fall on her. It can also happen that the man, in view of the accomplished fact, may wish to take advantage of a

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583 situation favorable to himself and only pay for her a sum much lower than that stipulated by tradition, which is what generally happens and which is why the woman's relatives are extremely upset, since some other Guajiro might abuse any other of their women with impunity, because he considers their men incapable of making him /89/ pay what is due. When this happens the clan becomes demoralized, its women are not respected, and, in a word, the prestige of the group deteriorates considerably.

Distribution of the woman's marriage payment. Given the clan family organization so extensive in La Guajira, which we shall see in detail further on, the payment (livestock, jewelry, etc.) which is received on the sale of a girl in marriage falls into various hands. In the first place, what is received as marriage payment for the first girl who marries depends entirely on the father, since the amount at which she is valued is the same that he paid for her mother; she represents the return that the law allows him, after a long interval, for the investment he made when he bought the girl's mother. He receives this payment, but it does not become entirely his since, as he received help from his family group, he must repay this help in proportion to what he received, until he has satisfied all and each of those who co-operated at the time he bought his wife. If they are dead he must give their shares to their legitimate heirs.

The necklace which is given as a sign of the engagement of this first daughter goes to the paternal grandmother, as it was she who had to hand it /one?/ over as approbation of the proposed purchase /of the girl's mother? -- Ed./.

The payment for the second daughter goes to the mother's family and is distributed among them according to their kin relationship; first to the mother and most influential maternal uncle, who bears a large part of the responsibility of the family and is considered as father; later to the other people, not forgetting the head of the extended family group, the so-called "cacique," from whom they receive help when a son is getting married, for a wake, etc., although the kin relationship on many occasions is distant.

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583 They also send a part to the most friendly neighbors who have marriageable daughters, because they hope that when one of these marries the present will be amply repaid. It is customary when they are distributing the marriage payment, if they have friends who have no daughters, for them to send them nothing, because they say: "Those people have no daughters and so they will never be able to return our gift."

The goods obtained from the sale of the other daughters who marry go to the maternal patrimony, although, as we have seen, the bridegroom's relatives participate because a goat or a sheep is presented to each of the women who intervene in the handing over of the animals. The necklaces which are given on betrothal are for the girl's mother, who in /90/ turn must supply one to each of her sons when they become engaged to be married.

Moreover, there is a special payment which is always made to the mother of the bride, and this is for the matrimonial hammock made by her. Generally, the price is ten cows in rich families, and when this payment is made, which is done personally by the bridegroom to his mother-in-law, it signifies that he is going to take possession of the woman he has bought; and she is then indirectly handed over to him, since the place (a neighboring room) is pointed out where he will find the hammock and the woman who will be his wife. This payment gives him the right to the conjugal bed and to cohabit with the woman whom he has bought and must be paid to the mother, partly because she made the hammock and partly because she brought up her daughter, bearing all the costs of rearing her and educating her. No one else shares in this amount.

When a female bond servant or slave is getting married, the product of the sale goes to her master exclusively, without having [567] to be shared with anyone, first because the price is low, and 422 second because the ownership of a slave or a bond servant is individual.

When the marriage payment has been arranged to be paid in installments and the second of these is not forthcoming in the

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583 stipulated time, the woman's family takes her back again without any claims allowed from the man. But if some time later the man wants to pay what is owing, he enters into conversation with his affinal relatives who, once they have received the necessary amount, hand his wife back to him.

The distribution of payments obtained through different forms of marriage other than the traditional one will be seen as they are studied in detail.

Payment for childbirth and pregnancy. Apart from the price
583 of the woman the man must pay, whether the relationship is legal
262 or illegal, for the inconveniences caused by pregnancy and delivery. This payment is made in cows or other animals to the woman's family, who can use these animals for slaughter or sell them or include them in the family herd. But the woman may not eat the flesh of these animals which are given in payment for the troubles she suffered during pregnancy, for the blood she spilled, and for the pains she bore during delivery, because they represent a payment of her very being and are identified with her. To eat them would be almost like eating her own flesh or something similar, and for this reason she cannot have any part of them, either directly or indirectly. /91/

Marriage before puberty. At the present time a man contracts
583 marriage for the first time when he has obtained his economic
582 emancipation when he is about nineteen. His subsequent marriages are the result of his inclination and the opportunities he may have to buy other women.

As a general rule, women marry when they have passed puberty and the period of seclusion. However, a very general custom existed, and to some extent still exists, in regions which because of their geographical situation were inaccessible to the white man and the missionary, but now tends to disappear: the purchase of impuberal girls about ten years old (who have not yet developed physically nor passed through the traditional ceremonies of seclusion) by rich Indians, already old, who have a considerable number of wives. These old men pay a price which

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583 582 satisfies the girl's parents, who, attracted by the economic possibilities of their future son-in-law, arrange the marriage without consulting the wishes of the impuberal child, although they sometimes try to persuade her, making her see the advantageous situation such a marriage may ensure. The girl in many cases has a child before her first menstruation appears.

It is said in La Guajira that old men practice this custom because they derive more sexual incentive from young and undeveloped feminine figures, and this prolongs their masculine potency.

583 177 Marriage of Guajiro women with civilizados. With very few exceptions intermarriage is carried out between Indians and civilizados /nonnatives/. It is of two kinds, temporary and permanent, in accordance with the length of stay of the civilizado man in the peninsula and is nearly always limited to the Guajiro law of marriage by purchase of the woman.

The temporary marriages consist of unions established between traders or civil or military authorities who must stay some time in the peninsula, having come alone and finding in the purchase of a native woman the solution of their personal problems. They live with the woman they have bought, adapting themselves to the norms of life in La Guajira, and have children who, according to legal tradition, do not belong to them. As their obligation to their family is so limited and the maternal relatives have continued to give backing to the woman, they can go away at any moment, as indeed they do, without altering the life of the home that they founded, because the woman has not been uprooted, as in the case of a Catholic marriage, from her social institutions nor her relatives, who, once the marriage is dissolved /92/ by the definite absence of the white element, take her back again into their midst. The woman continues to sustain the family and bring it up under the protection and counsel of her maternal relatives, since very frequently nothing is ever again heard of the father. Sometimes they marry again or live with another man.

Permanent marriages are effected with civilizado men who, having definitely settled in the country, sometimes decide to get

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583 177 married in the Catholic church or to buy a woman (usually one with standing) and found a home, which in the first case shows signs of the predominance of the father's culture and in the second is much nearer the customs and usages of themother, by whom it is much more directly influenced due to the form of marriage. The children conceived /in the marriage/ are legally recognized in the case of the Catholic marriage and very frequently are sent to the interior of the country to be educated. In the case of the Guajiro form of marriage, the children belong to the mother and her consanguineous relatives, whose surname they take.

Temporary marriages may be due to the fact that the women belong to a group of low status and are sold by their parents because they are in a desperate economic situation. For this reason it is not unusual for a white man to have several wives, as many as he can buy and support. We know that the woman who has been bought must furnish the home, but this is not the custom when she marries a white man, for in spite of the payment the civilizado man must make himself responsible for the proper maintenance of his wife and children in shelter, food, and clothes.

These material advantages make it possible and frequent for one to find young Guajiro women married to decrepit old men who can give them a comparatively comfortable home, which they share with their relatives, who find a solution for their economic difficulties in unions of this kind.

The problem of these marriages lies in the fact that the woman consents only because of hunger, and when the opportunity presents itself for her to give way to her affection for someone else or to satisfy her instincts, she easily abandons her civilizado husband and runs away with her lover, far away from any action her husband may try to take, whose claims are usually ignored by her consanguineous relatives, to whom he has made the marriage payment, because they know that the white man has neither a powerful group nor the Colombian law to back him. Once the civilizado leaves La Guajira, the runaway pair legitimize their union, contracting marriage through a payment which the man can make anew to the girl's parents.

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583 177 Permanent marriages take place generally between women of standing and whites of recognized influence, and they are more stable. The conduct of the woman and her relatives is in accord with the rank of her husband, and he on his part maintains toward his wife a certain courtesy and gives her the good treatment she deserves as a person of high status. In these cases it is not unusual that the woman has been bought in accord with Guajiro legal tradition and that the marriage lasts; but frequently it is ratified later in the Catholic church, or both forms were used from the first moment.

177 595 849 It is possible, also, that the white man, following Guajiro custom and in spite of his Catholic marriage, has other wives of lower status than the first, who always keeps the rank of legitimate wife in our sense and on whom depends the social representation of the children, the only heirs of the father and of the home, legal center of the family. The other women, although bought according to Guajiro law, acquire more or less the rank of concubines in our culture, and their children, the position of illegitimate ones. Catholic missionary influence and relations with whites have made the Indian come to regard his form of marriage as a little immoral. For this reason they now say when speaking of a Guajiro woman married with the rites of their culture: "She is So-and-so's woman," and the woman who has been married by Catholic rite says: "I am So-and-so's wife." Thus when one asks a Guajiro woman, for example, "Where is your husband?", one must be careful to use the right word for husband /marido/ or spouse /esposo/, using the first word in the case of a marriage according to peninsula rites and the second in the case of a Catholic marriage, the word "marido" being considered offensive when improperly used. As a consequence of this fact, the concept of legitimate and illegitimate children has sprung up, a concept which has no place in primitive Guajiro law. A child even though born as the result of illicit relations is a child without adjectives, either of scorn or contempt. In such cases the mother has received by force through her relatives the payment for her abuse and the

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177 595 848 birth in such a way that they are never placed outside the pale of the law. This may be due to the uterine line of kinship in which the father does not count in the recognition of children.

In these cases of marriage between whites and Guajiro women there also occurs a union of these two ideas. The white man refuses to buy the woman or legitimize their union through the [583] necessary traditional proceedings demanded by her culture. The refusal to comply with the main traditional requisite makes the man unacceptable, and he is considered an intruder.

The children, illegitimate /94/ according to the paternal mentality, meet a natural reluctance among their mother's relatives, who however in the long run have to accept them.

582 Consanguineous marriage. Although the Guajiro community is in an obvious process of disintegration, there is a characteristic which is strongly maintained: exogamy, which, at the present time, does not mean the prohibition of marriage within the same clan group, but within a limited circle of close consanguineous kin: brothers /and sisters, hermanos/, uncles /and aunts, tíos/, and ascendants in the female line. Thus today in La Guajira we find marriages between individuals of the same clan, since the tie has weakened so much that although they belong to the same clan group, they do not consider themselves relatives.

If the marriage takes place within the small family circle, the opinion of society and of the relatives is never favorable. They cannot explain why nor wish to accept that an individual should marry a consanguineal kin included among those just mentioned. Their magical beliefs reinforce this, because these beliefs establish the prohibition that a man must not marry a relative, or he will be come bald.

582 588 Guajiro mentality cannot accept as natural the marriage of a woman to her maternal uncle. This would be incest at its worst, because the maternal uncle has the position that a father has with us. There was a case, and a similar attitude has always been observed in like cases, of a Guajiro girl who had sexual relations with her maternal uncle. After pregnancy became

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935 of affairs of which we could find no evidence after puberty and the seclusion had taken place. It appears that the only case we can quote is the one referred to above and which is preserved in the traditional lore.

583 Catholic marriage. Guajiro marriage is the basis of all the legal organization of the peninsula, because in it, represented by the marriage payment, are concentrated all economic life and social laws. For these reasons Catholic marriage encounters much opposition on the part of the native and causes a series of problems for those who contract it.

The first of these is that such a marriage is done outside of the family social organization and leaves whoever contracts it dependent on their own efforts to confront the social collectivity of the peninsula. We shall see why: If contracting a Catholic marriage means for the woman that her relatives do not receive the customary payment as recompense for bringing her up and as a backing in the future for her and her desendants, the system of mutual aid between consanguineous groups which demands repayment at some future date, will create a very difficult situation for her father as an active member of the clan, since, on not receiving money for the first daughter that marries, he cannot comply with the system of repayment and mutual help, which his relatives then resent and which diminishes his prestige, since it was with this payment that he expected to pay the debts he incurred when he bought his wife. /96/

The woman who marries according to the Catholic rite also encounters another series of problems with her consanguineous group: Her husband, although legal, is an intruder and the direct cause of all the troubles which overtake them. It is difficult for them to tolerate him because, besides being the person who separated their relative from her consanguineous ties, it was he who obliged her to break with all legal tradition, putting them all in a secondary role. He acquires, then, the standing of a lover, because they feel that such a marriage is as illegal as is having a concubine in our culture. He has acquired a wife without paying for her and for this reason is considered to have usurped a right

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583 which legally belonged to her consanguineous relatives. With this refusal to pay, he has destroyed the standing of the woman, since it is the size of the payment which fixes this, and this denominator of her family now does not exist. This lowers her consanguineous relatives, the bitterest insult to the Indian, for whom the conservation of prestige, its strengthening and increase, is a permanent concern and a rule of life. It puts them in the position of a weak group in which their daughter has been abducted without having received the corresponding payment. They await a similar situation for the descendants of the couple since they, with only the backing of their father and mother, must face all hazards that present themselves, without counting on the economic and social help of their relatives.

595 Furthermore, although the man may marry in the Catholic church, this does not mean for the woman that her husband is going to be monogamous, because he will live as suits him best, buying all the other wives he wants according to the peninsula system, without taking into account that the first marriage prohibits him from having other women.

583 177 Catholic marriage, which presents itself as one of the best ways to achieve the acculturation of the Indians, his passage to civilization, and his definitive incorporation into Colombian life is now beginning to be gradually accepted and in this way is breaking down the old matrilineal clan organization. It contains various outstanding facts which radically transform the traditional customs. We shall see some of these:

a) The preparation of the home, which in the traditional Guajiro marriage is the woman's responsibility, in the Catholic marriage is entirely the man's, even to the house itself. We know that the payment which the man gives for his wife is made so that the wife and her maternal relatives can take over these /domestic/ obligations. There being no such payment in many Catholic marriages, the man must necessarily, and in fact does, build his own house as soon as possible and must have it adequately furnished with all the household goods necessary for domestic life.

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583 177 b) The responsibility for the support of the home also falls to the man, not only in regard to food for himself, his wife, and the children, but also for clothing for them all.

c) The Guajiro marriage, as the base of all social organization, necessarily holds sway over inheritance laws. If a couple marry in the Catholic church, they break with this law, and Colombian law is substituted for the laws of the peninsula which no longer cover them. In this way, on the death of the father, his goods are not inherited by his maternal nephews, but rather, in accordance with the Colombian law in force, by his wife and children, obligatory heirs. The custom of gifts to the sons from the father during his lifetime may go on, but these never constitute the whole of the inheritance.

583 177 423 d) Traditional Guajiro organization in respect to land makes of it communal property divided among the various family groups, who are permitted use and usufruct, but with alienation expressly forbidden. These rights to settle, to cultivate arable land, to pasture, to use the sources of water supply, to take advantage of the products of the woods, etc., are all denied to the couple who have married in accordance with the Catholic church.

583 177 e) There are also appreciable changes in residence of the newly married pair, which will be seen in the paragraph about it in this chapter.

f) Catholic marriage, as is known, gives primacy among us to the transmission of the father's surname, but a marriage consecrated with the Guajiro rite does not, since in this case the children belong to the mother, are of her blood, and use her name exclusively. This fact shows clearly how, by accepting the Catholic bond, the woman isolates her children from the group to which she belonged, because from then onward they do not bear her name, the expression of her family affiliation, and for this reason her maternal relatives do not have to give them economic aid or social backing when they need it. On their part, the maternal relatives of the father have difficulty accepting the children of one of their menfolk as their children in place of their

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583 177 nephews and nieces, and the fact that they bear their surname when they are children of a union with a woman of a different family group is hard for them to take. In a certain way, the children, although nominally belonging to the father, find themselves in an abnormal situation among their paternal relatives and have a feeling of being rejected, and among their maternal relatives they find a similar attitude and hurt feelings because they have been separated violently from them by their mother's /98/ Catholic marriage, which has completely broken the traditional blood relationship, giving them another surname.

g) If Guajiro custom gives the woman the right to give her name to her children, Catholic marriage transfers this right to the man. She generally gives the child the name of an ancestor, a brother /or sister/ or an uncle /or aunt/; and the man, having been conceded this right, does likewise. If the marriage is Catholic, the children are also baptized. This does not mean that children born to a typical couple married by Guajiro rites are not also baptized, but this is rarer.

h) With the breaking of the consanguineous bonds which bind the child to his maternal relatives, his education is influenced more directly by the father, since he definitely respects his wishes and consults him, the father, in this way, taking the place of the mother's brothers, who in the traditional marriage assume these responsibilities. The children respect and obey their father, and the duality of authority which one observes in the Guajiro home is not felt here because the man, from the first moment, establishes the predominance of his will over his wife and children. In this way, the sons identify with their progenitor and defend him because he is their real father and not somebody who has no consanguineous tie and no interests in common with them.

The fact that the father assumes the responsibility for the actions of his sons does not mean that, as in the case of a Guajiro marriage, the mother then obtains the right to claim compensation payment from her husband for anything that may happen to them in any circumstance, or vice versa, but that both assume the total responsibility, without giving rise to any compensation claims

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583 177 from one or the other when the blame for any particular act falls directly on one of the parents. Each one is free to punish the children, without asking the approval of the other; neither feels inhibited about giving an order, nor is it necessary to consult the relatives of either before making a decision. In this way, authority makes itself felt in the home, is more closely linked with the parents, less liable to interference from consanguineous relatives, and less limited, making the education of the children easier for this reason and ensuring a unity of authority in the home.

Marriage through sexual relations between the unmarried.

636 583 Sexual relations before marriage are strictly forbidden in the Guajiro community except during the celebration of the Dance of the Kid (ceremony of propitiation of the rain and the harvest) when it is permitted without /99/ entailing social punishment for those guilty. When times are normal a compensation claim for abuse or usufruct is presented, or a mutual pact made for marriage, legalizing in this way the antisocial act committed. The varieties that may appear in this regard are the following:

583 For abduction, which may have two aspects, sham abduction and real abduction.

Sham abduction is looked upon with favor by the woman's maternal relatives, who, knowing about the affectionate relations between her and an individual belonging to an important family group with whom it would be very convenient to be linked by marriage even without an offer for her hand or the stipulation of payment, let the girl go with her lover without offering any opposition. After a time they present their compensation claim, and the man sends his relatives who are acting as his sponsors /padrinas familiares/ to make an arrangement with the woman's maternal relatives. They then come to a reasonable agreement, and the man hurries to pay the price arranged. This proceeding is carried through peacefully, always counting on the good faith and acquiescence of the two families, although it does have the appearance of an abduction.

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583 Real abduction takes place when a Guajiro youth is not yet able to buy a woman with his own possessions, or does not want to collect payments from the family to buy her, or because, in the case of a new wife (polygamy), he resorts to this action, often thinking that he will be able to avoid the payment altogether or get a price or installments more in keeping with what possessions he has. He then abducts a woman and goes away as far as possible, taking his cattle with him. This abduction offers two possibilities when the claim for compensation payment is presented to him and in fact to his relatives: fifst, to pay the price of the woman through a later arrangement, in which case the marriage is legalized. The payment is usually made in two installments. Second, to cover the price of the abuse, that is, the usufruct he has taken of the woman without previous payment and later, if she is pregnant, for the pregnancy and the pains of delivery. In this case the payment is less than that of a poor marriage and does not give the man any right over the woman or over her child.

583 948 Illicit pregnancy. When an unmarried woman becomes pregnant, the maternal family is gravely offended, and it is not unusual for her brothers to beat her brutally, saying, "You have not been bought, and you are like a burro," and they try to make her confess who /100/ the guilty man is. The mother and the aunts intervene also, scolding her harshly. Very poor families, knowing that it is all useless and that they cannot make the man comply with their compensation claim for abuse, resign themselves to the situation almost without protest. The most they say to the girl when she has the child, in the most contemptuous way, is, "You have given birth like a bitch," that is to say, "You, whose pregnancy and labor pains nobody paid for, you, whose maternity is not even recognized by he who caused it, you, who do not have a man who honors you in your maternity, you are like a bitch that gives birth alone and does not even know who caused its pregnancy." When the woman is of high class she is nearly always abandoned by her relatives.

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836 compunction in reproaching her, saying: "What! Is that man your father, your uncle, or your brother that you go walking with him, talking and laughing?" She must at once stop talking to the man and submissively pay attention to the admonition, because if not, the individual in question will go to her parents' house and will say to them: "Who is this that your daughter is talking and laughing with? Has he perhaps already bought her?" And her parents, very much annoyed at her conduct, will interrogate the girl more or less in this manner: "Who is this whom they tell me you are talking to? What does he want from you?" She will answer that he is her sweetheart and wants to buy her, to which her parents reply: "It is not to you that he has to speak but to us. Do not speak to him again."

839 583 Apart from these cases, which one might call voluntary, there are cases of violation which, as we know, give cause for a compensation claim for the illegal use of the girl, compounded by the abuse of subjecting her against her will and for the injuries she may have suffered on being violated. If she becomes pregnant as a consequence of such a union, then the corresponding compensation claim will be made for the troubles of pregnancy and labor. But the action by which the woman suffered will not be made the object of recrimination, nor will it lower her value in the eyes of the Guajiro collectivity, if the payment for what has happened is paid in full. There is nothing to object to after that, either in her or in her relatives, and the child will belong to her and will not be the object either of rejection or contempt.

Lastly, it is necessary to take into account the frequent violations of young women still in seclusion by rich Indians, when the girls belong to a poor group and their relatives have to leave them alone in the hut for some reason or other. They say that, as the woman is under treatment and during this time whoever is in charge of her avoids the appearance of menstruation by means of herbs, she does not become pregnant if she has sexual relations. But if such an act does occur, the woman is taken out of seclusion immediately, and the corresponding compensation claim is presented.

/101 cont./

839 In the cases that we have described, as in that of abduction,
583 the relatives of the girl oblige the seducor to marry by paying the stipulated price, or to pay an amount they arrive at for the abuse committed. If neither of these alternatives is complied with, the enmity of the two groups involved becomes so bitter that war ensues. /102/

837 Marriage by adultery. When a woman commits adultery
583 and the case is known, attempts are made to settle the matter legally: the lover is obliged by the maternal relatives to pay what is claimed by the legitimate husband, or to pay to them the value of a usual marriage, in which case the woman involved on the litigation becomes his lawful wife, according to Guajiro law.

At the present time this custom, which previously used to end with the death of the lover, the husband, or of both, since the husband tried to solve the problem in this way in spite of future consequences, is now dying out due to the emigration of the men and the growing prostitution among the women, both in and outside the peninsula, for the many reasons already seen.

583 Marriage of female bond servants and slaves. Although this
567 aspect will be treated fully in the chapter headed Slavery and Bond Service, we would like to present it, if only summarily, in this chapter so as not to disturb the order of the ideas we are tracing.

The women and children taken prisoners in the wars which strong clan groups declare on weak ones when these have caused the death of one of their members enter into the state of slavery. This means that the all-powerful will of their owner may be imposed on every act of their lives, even up to his being able to kill them without possibility of claim, since their relatives who would be the claimants have been slaughtered or dispersed.

In this way adult women and girl slaves may be sold, and in effect are, especially to be taken to Curaçao, Trinidad, etc.; they may be given away to their owners' relatives, or used in domestic service. If the master of a woman slave wishes to

/102 cont./

583 567 possess her, she must submit, and the child that may result will be the property of the father, owner of the slave. Furthermore, if some man who likes the slave wants to buy her, he may negotiate with her owner and pay what he asks, with which payment she is freed and given the standing of wife, and the children will be free and belong to the maternal group which their oppressors had tried to extinguish. If the woman slave has had sexual relations with someone and as a consequence is pregnant, her owner hurries to oblige her to confess who caused it in order to make a compensation claim. If the payment is only for abuse (which is what it is considered when the lover is someone influential), the owner receives it, and the child remains a slave like his mother but with a lesser degree of oppression. /103/

567 Sometime the man who causes the slave's pregnancy is the son of her owner. In such a case there is no compensation claim. At most his mother scolds the boy, the pregnancy is allowed to take its course, and the child remains in the same condition as its mother, that is to say, slavery.

What puts a limit to the sexual freedom of a man is the compensation claim that the woman's relatives might present; consequently, when she has no relatives or if those she has are not powerful, the woman is the object of insolence and desire on the part of men who find in her an easy and not at all dangerous satisfaction. Thus, women slaves are continually abused by everyone, having no defense whatever since their owners sometimes make no claim, as the children born represent a profit because they become their property.

The same or an even worse condition is the lot of the daughters of slaves who have been bought as wives from their owners by someone, because they belong to a maternal family group that has been destroyed or dispersed and they are really the last of their clan. In this situation, they have barely reached puberty when they are violated or besieged and, having no possibility of defending themselves, they go on submitting until they end up as prostitutes.

/103 cont./

583 567 Returning to the women slaves, we would say lastly that the owner may give a woman slave to one of his other slaves for a wife or sell her to another owner to be the wife of one of his slaves. If the owner buys a woman slave to provide a wife for one of his male slaves, the children of the union belong to him, and he also collects the marriage payment for the first daughter of this couple to marry, in order to be repaid the amount he paid for her mother. (Aspects of descent will be treated fully in the chapter, Slavery and Bond Service).

591 Marriage residence. Guajiro law covering land gives the Indian ample scope to fix his residence once he has married, for apart from the fact that primarily the new family cell may establish its home in the maternal house of either the wife or the husband, it also offers the following possibilities: a) on the wife's side, on the land of the wives of any of her brothers, since the payment made by the family for each of them included the right to establish homes, to open cleared land, and to pasture livestock, a right which also holds good on the clan lands of the wives of maternal uncles; b) on the husband's side, on the lands of his father and that of the wives of his brothers and maternal uncles, for the same reasons as stated above.

But Guajiro custom generally inclines toward establishing a dwelling beside that of the wife's mother, so that one can say /104/ of marriage that it is matrilocal. The newly married couple live for a time in the same house with the wife's maternal relatives, but when their family increases and they begin to acquire a certain financial independence, they build a house near that of her mother.

Presumably the marriage payment contributes to the marital residence of the couple, since, as we have seen, this requires the girl's consanguineous kin to supply room and board to the husband.

After a more or less lengthy interval has been spent on the lands of the woman's clan, the family, now considerably increased and economically established through the efforts of the

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[124 cont.]

585 c) There is another very important fact in this sexual aspect of the fiesta that we are describing, which is what we might call proof of virginity. [125]

Virginity in woman is highly valued by the natives in spite of the fact that at the present time, due to economic acculturative factors, it is increasingly difficult to find virgins among marriageable women, a state of affairs that the Indian male is well aware of. But it is always a matter of pride and something to be boasted of for a Guajiro man to find on his marriage night that his bride is a virgin. It is the custom, furthermore, that if the man marries not knowing that his wife has lost her virginity and has the consequent disillusion on his wedding night, the bride's relatives have to return a part of the livestock which the man paid for her, especially the family necklace. The Indian's concern about this matter, which remains hidden when he is in a normal state, comes to the surface during his drunken bouts, when he will sing about his wife, extolling her and boasting of having had a virgin in his marriage hammock, or insulting and degrading her in coarse improvisations when he considers that he has been defrauded.

524 This attitude toward sex on the part of the native, or better said this value he places on the virginity of his future wives, is expressed in a sort of game which is played at the Dance of the Kid. To play it, the girls gather in a group about a singer who sings such a song as this: "Let us see, my pretty miss, if you are a virgin, if truly you have not run around too freely, if no young male has put his hands on your body." He then passes his hands over each girl's body, tickling her. He starts at her big toe and goes upward, touching her instep, calves, knees, thighs, genitals, hips, stomach, torso, breasts, armpits, and continues up her neck until he reaches the top of her head. The girl who remains quiet, indifferent, without laughing and without even a smile wins the test and is declared a virgin. The singer then sings again: "You are indeed a virgin, my lovely majayura....," and chants a veritable song of flattery and finishes by escorting her to a set place. He then continues with the rest of the girls gathered there, repeating the same routine. When a girl moves or laughs,

[128 cont.]
of war to the death will result between the clans affected.

One has to take into account the fact that a woman who has been bought for wife is relatively valuable, and the native is not always in a position to accumulate the number of animals sufficient to pay for her, although it is considered an obligation on the part of his relatives to assist him when the time for his marriage arrives. As prostitution is so limited because of the condition of inferiority in which it places the woman who traffics in sex, the situation of the unmarried male in this respect is difficult. We repeat again that we make this statement on the basis of the facts of La Guajira social customs in normal times, and not on the basis of the present period when they are suffering from ever increasing problems of hunger, poverty, and acculturation, phenomena which are overthrowing all their traditional institutions.

Presenting the question in these terms, one can appreciate the trying position of the bachelor Guajiro native who is without slaves and without economic resources to enable him to buy a wife. He lives within a regimen of limitations and restrictions which reach even to sexual taboos which can be divided into two classes: special cases, especially applicable to the sex life of shamans, as we have seen; and general cases, applicable to the whole community and which go to the extreme of provoking curious euphemisms in the language when the word for the genital organ is phonetically similar to some other word, as in the case with the word for dog.

These restrictions must be considered in the totality of the social norms, but this is not the moment to expound on them as they will be fully covered in this review as an interpretation of the whole of Guajiro society. However, we wish to point out their presence in the Dance of the Kid, or better said their absence, since, as we have said, these restrictions disappear, and there is complete sexual freedom which permits the minstrel to caress the young maids on the pretext of deciding their virginity or loss of it, a thing that in normal times would not be permitted, and to go to the extreme of countenancing carnal union without economic or social consequences, the only

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
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88 [668] weaving, making dresses, hammocks, mahes, &c., sewing, and all the little knick-knacks Indians love so well.

The confinement is not so isolated as it seems, generally several of her female relations are round the door with the enclosed, who of course becomes rather stout, much blanched, almost white, and some exceedingly beautiful. Strangers and men are not excluded from peeping in through [584] the door, always with an eye to matrimony, and she can be sold and liberated at once, though her husband if rich prefers leaving her to complete her term of schooling. On re-entering to society again, a special festival, *ebaütis*, is held with dancing, &c. An ox is killed, and the girl is dressed in the clothes she has made; her hair is cut and she resumes all her beads, necklaces, bracelets, and other ornaments.

562 [579] Women are much respected by the Goajiros. In a quarrel or drunken brawl, women often save bloodshed by stepping in and tearing the weapons out of their husband's or brother's hand. Travelling with women is consequently perfectly safe, and in case of danger, if one undertakes to protect a stranger, he may rely upon coming out all right.

● 583 Matrimony is a mere case of barter. The girl is sold for a certain price, fixed by the father. This is paid by the intended husband, and divided by the father, who appropriates the best part for himself and his relations, the rest going to the wife's relations. As it is chiefly in 585 cattle, these are killed and a kind of bridal festival held. There is no other ceremony. A wife is under obligation to support her husband, 593 find him in food, clothes, &c. She does most of the trading, and a [462] contract made with an Indian is worthless, should his better half object. An Indian cannot inflict bodily injury on his wife, for he becomes liable [583] to her relations, and should she die during childbirth he has to repay the father what he gave for her. But if the *wife is untrue* (a rare occur- [684] rence) he demands from the father the price he paid for her, who if he cannot refund, helps him to recover from the seducer, plus tear or compensation from his mother-in-law. At the husband's death, the 587 wife becomes a legacy to his brother, usually the youngest; if there are 769 none, then his nephew inherits her. The daughter of a chief is worth, 583 according to his wealth and power (i. e. the number of men he can dispose of in a fight) from 6 to 150 head of cattle (12l. to 300l.).

764 When a person dies, a grand drinking festival is given, that lasts as long as there is anything to drink—days, and even weeks, with the wealthy. These latter are buried twice, and have two festivals. A rich person is always buried in the rancho, and on the spot where he was born; being often carried for that purpose immense distances. A fire is lighted every night from sunset to sunrise in front of the grave, for the sole use of the dead. Immense piles of wood are gathered for this purpose, as the body is kept two years in the house. Then all the relations can meet on a certain day, and the second feast takes place, when the bones are carefully gathered, placed in a jar, and consigned to the

6: Santa Cruz E-5 (1940) 1941
SC13 Goajiro SC13

604 Regarding the marriage of the senior nephew, the maternal
587 uncle plays no prescribed part, unless the prospective bride comes from a very wealthy family and consequently the bride price is quite high. In such cases the uncle is expected to help
(583) with a small donation to meet the price. Although this is expected from him he has no say whatsoever in the selection of the bride. The bride price in its entirety, or certainly in major part, is paid by the father of the bridegroom. The influence of the uncle, even if he has happened to help pay part of the bride
(583) price, is practically zero. This is the rule, but naturally individual deviations from it are found. The case of Camilo is again illustrative of this. Although he is not contemplating marriage for the present, Camilo told the present writer that once he had made up his mind to get married he would go to his uncle for advice. No other such cases came to the attention of the writer, but speaking with other informants on this subject he was invariably told that such cases do often occur and that they are not out of the ordinary. However, this is not prescribed behavior and arises only from personal regard or affection.

604 There is a prescribed pattern of conduct that both the senior maternal uncle and his senior nephew must observe when in each other's company, regardless of what personal sentiments they have for each other. If there are other people around the nephew must always keep silence if his uncle is speaking and if the nephew wants to say something he must first ask permission of his uncle. This permission is asked by the nephew rising from his seat or, if he is already standing, by tapping his uncle on the arm. The uncle is at complete liberty to grant or refuse the permission; however, a refusal was never witnessed by the present writer. In all ways the nephew must show respect and
604 conduct himself with propriety. If he, in any way, should fail
626 to conform, he would be severely criticised, not only by his uncle but also by the rest of the company, whether they were relatives or not. On the other hand, the uncle must not laugh at his nephew,—although he may laugh with him,—and if his nephew says something wrong he must correct him in such a way that his nephew would not feel hurt. Should the uncle do otherwise he would be subjected to criticism, not by his nephew, but by the rest of the company.

6: Santa Cruz E-5 (1940) 1941
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604 the niece the giver. Another difference is that while the giving-receiving relation in the uncle-nephew situation is between the senior nephew and his senior maternal uncle, in the uncle-niece situation it is between the senior maternal uncle and all the daughters of all his sisters.

In the senior maternal uncle-niece relationship the whole question of inheritance is out of the picture, as in Guajiro [428] culture the woman, regardless of her status, cannot inherit. The nieces never expect and never get anything from any of their uncles in the way of inheritance or otherwise. Consequently we can dismiss economic expectations on the part of the niece as a motivating factor. Their behavior toward their senior maternal uncle is the resultant of other factors. The senior maternal uncle being on his part the receiver of benefits may act from affection or regard, or from selfish or other motives, or combinations thereof.

604 The senior maternal uncle receives material profits from all 583 of his sisters' daughters through the bride price. The bride price, however big or small, must be paid to the senior maternal uncle of the bride, while he on the other hand does not contribute anything toward the dowry which the bride must present to the bridegroom. The bride price must always be paid in cattle, while the dowry usually consists of gifts of clothing, household goods, hammocks, etc. Consequently the senior maternal uncle is very much interested in the marriage of his nieces and sees that they marry advantageously. He may accept or reject [584] a prospective bridegroom at will, and the girl has to conform [183] and to say nothing in the matter. This is the theory and to a great extent the practice, although there are cases in which the uncle has given in on the insistence of the niece or of the prospective bridegroom or of both, and a few cases of elopement have also come to the notice of the present writer. As previously mentioned, all of this concerns only the senior maternal uncle and all the daughters of all his sisters: the other uncles, maternal or other, have no say in the matter.

604 The following cases will serve as illustrations. Estrella is 584 the daughter of Ramoncito's oldest sister. They all belong to the wealthy class. She is now of marriageable age—about 15

6: Santa Cruz E-5 (1940) 1941
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or 16 years old—and it is entirely up to Ramoncito to find a suitable mate for her. As yet there is no prospective bridegroom but when he is found he will be entirely Ramoncito's choice. Ramoncito may seek the advice of Estrella's parents, but the final say rests with him. Even the girl has little or nothing to do with the selection. Ramoncito will settle the bride price and collect it all for himself. He will not share it with his other brothers nor will the girl's parents receive any part of it. Ramoncito concerns himself greatly about Estrella and seldom lets a day pass without paying her a visit. Estrella comes to visit her uncle quite frequently too, either alone—for they live close by—or with her mother, and she always brings a little gift for Ramoncito's only child. Ramoncito has another sister whose daughter is already married. In this case it was Ramoncito again who made all the arrangements for the marriage, selecting a wealthy bridegroom, settling the bride price, and collecting it. He kept all of it for himself as he is supposed to do. None of the other relatives had anything to say regarding the marriage.

The following is another case, one from a different level of society. Carmelina is the daughter of a poor man who lives at San Antonio. She has only one maternal uncle, who is also poor. About a year ago her uncle insisted upon her marrying the bridegroom whom he had already selected for her. The bride price was arranged and collected by her uncle, but he being a wasteful man—according to Carmelina—went to Venezuela, sold the cattle there and spent all of his money. Since that time this uncle has been trying to get some cattle from Carmelina's husband, but, as he has no further claim on his niece, they have refused him. Carmelina, apparently is happy in her marriage and glad to be out of her uncle's reach. He pays frequent visits to his niece, but as he is received with cool indifference his visits are less frequent than they used to be.

Now for the actual pattern of behavior. The present writer was able to observe personally the mode of behavior between Estrella and Ramoncito and between Carmelina and her uncle. Let us take Estrella's case first. Apart from the fact that in the Guajira whenever we find a mixed group the women in-

[96 cont.]
832 witchcraft have "whispered" over them, that is, when they repeat over them a series of magic incantations which have the object of giving them the power to make a man, or men, love the owner [97] as she may desire, and especially her husband when it is the case of a married woman.

We have seen in previous paragraphs how the hair of a pubescent girl serves as a base for men to make magic charms which can be used against the girl. But the hair of such girls in different circumstances serves to attract men in general and causes a woman to be looked on with such deference by a man that he buys her to take as a wife at a good price. For this [826 302] reason the young Guajiro woman, especially those of the Sierra de Jarara, keep their hair when it is cut. At times to make the action more effective and to obtain better and quicker results, [237] they place it under a patch of cow dung. The association of their hair with cow dung is founded on a socio-economic phenomenon which we might briefly clarify.

556 We have seen repeatedly that wealth in La Guajira is
● 583 calculated by the number of heads of livestock that an individ-
832 ual owns; and it can be observed how a wife in their social organization is obtained by purchase. When the buyer is a rich man he pays in heads of cattle or horses; when poor, in goats and sheep. Hence it is clear every woman aspires to be paid for in cows and in a greater number than those paid for other women, as this establishes an advance in her social status. This is the reason why she buries her hair under cow dung and not that of any other animal. She has made a very primitive association but [237] one that speaks for itself. It would appear that the magic attraction is brought about by the dung, and the results desired are increased if this is from the cow, the animal of most value in La Guajira.

826 In any case, young women are most careful about leaving their cut hair about where it could be picked up by another person, and for this reason they guard it all their lives, giving it in this way a sacred quality. This characteristic which we have called sacred stems from the magic connection established by the primitive between a person and the different parts of his body, to

6: Santa Cruz E-5 (1940) 1941
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Estrella and her uncle may be controlled somewhat by personal regard and affection, such appear not to exist in the relations between Carmelina and her uncle. 604

The behavior of the senior maternal uncle is uniformly the same toward all of his nieces so far as the prescribed conduct is concerned, although he may not personally feel exactly the same toward every one of them due to individual difference in character and personality.

The behavior described so far has been that of the uncle and niece in public. As to the private relations between them, the present writer was informed that the relations were no different in private than in public.

Cases in which the niece goes against her uncle's will in marriage and elopes are very infrequent in the Guajira. When they occur they are severely criticized and the girl gets the reputation of being loose. Public opinion is so strong that in all the cases except one, which came to the attention of the present writer, the couple has had to move to another community away from both her family and his. The case in which the uncle has at first been opposed to the marriage but finally consents on the insistence of the couple falls into a different category. Such a couple is not criticized and may live without fear in the community. 583 584 604 626

Summary

As regards the senior maternal uncle and senior nephew relationship: first, the nephew, at least theoretically, is the recipient of benefits, and conducts himself with extreme propriety. Regardless of the regard or affection, he may or may not have for his uncle, he behaves according to rule lest public opinion turn against him and curtail his chances for trade, marriage, etc. Toward his other uncles, there seems to be no prescribed pattern and he may behave toward them as he pleases. Second, the attitude of the uncle toward his nephew is again largely controlled by public opinion. It is true that he does not have to show such marked formality as his nephew shows toward him, but on the other hand he must do nothing detrimental to the character or respect-status of the nephew. His behavior toward 604

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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It is, of course, only the usufruct that is inherited. The land can neither be sold nor given away, for it belongs to the clan. All members of a clan have the right to pasture their herds in the clan's territories, and every man also has the right to graze his beasts and to use wood and water in the lands belonging to his wife's clan. That is one of the advantages he acquires in return for the bride-price he has paid. There has developed a class distinction unusual among Indians on the primitive level. A man of simple origins can sometimes marry into a high-born family, but he does not become any the better for that, though his children belong to their mother's aristocratic clan. It is, however, seldom that a man of humble family can get himself a girl from the upper classes—that could only happen if he had inherited or had relatives who could help him pay the bride-price. This is so high that a young man almost always has to have the help of his clan to pay it. The relative of a girl of really good family may demand £1000 worth of cattle, while a girl of humbler stock can be had for £50 worth. The amount can be paid in money, but that is only done in the south, in the areas belonging to Venezuela, where the Indians are more accustomed to coin and have confidence in gold.

It must not be imagined that this is a question of purchase like buying a donkey, a cow or a slave. It is a transaction that concerns both clans. One should not marry within one's own clan. In the old days that was forbidden, but now they are not so strict, since the clans are often split into local sub-groups. The whole marriage transaction is well adapted to the social and economic system. (When, during the first oil rush, white workers from the Maracaibo oil fields bought poor girls, usually of half-breed parents, those were transactions whose legality under Guajiro law was merely fictitious.) The bridegroom's family helps him to pay the bride-price and contributes generously if the girl is of good family. The bride-price is to some extent regarded as compensation for what the family expended on the girl while she was growing up.

When a couple's first daughter marries, the father asks

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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for her as much as will enable him to repay the cattle the clan laid out for him when he married. The amounts obtained for younger daughters are also distributed among the family in a certain way. Payment of the bride-price confers a number of benefits. During the first year the newly married couple usually live as the guests of the bride's family. As has been said, the husband has the right to use the land owned by his wife's clan. The bride always brings a dowry in the form of ornaments and household utensils, often of cattle as well. The husband must look after the cattle, unless, as happens, the girl's family sends its own herdsman to see to them. The bride usually provides all the furnishings of the huts, as well as materials, hammocks and other textiles.

These advantages offset the bride-price to a quite considerable extent. The husband knows, too, that his wife's relations will keep an eye on her when he is away, for if she betrays him, he can return her to her family and require refund of the bride-price and payment of compensation. Thus the bride-price also acts as a guarantee against a grass widow kicking over the traces.

If the husband does not fulfil his duties, or if he treats his wife badly, her family can take her back without returning the bride-price. After that the man will naturally get no help from his clan, if he wishes to get himself another wife.

It is not always possible for the groom and his relations to pay all the bride-price immediately. In such cases it is possible to pay by instalments. The groom pays a large proportion of the price when the bride is handed over to him. If he is unable to pay the balance at the time fixed, he must give the girl back, losing what he has already paid. The girl is now less valuable in the marriage market, being second-hand, so to speak. The man is made to pay for the time he has had her and thereby makes up for the lower price she can command, if a new suitor turns up. According to this principle a seducer must pay compensation to the family of the girl he has seduced. It sometimes happens that a couple fall in love and the parents approve, but the young

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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583 614 man cannot immediately pay any worthwhile part of the bride-price. The young man may then abduct the girl with the tacit consent of her parents, and thereby postpone having to pay the bride-price. After some time, the girl's relatives will require payment, but meantime his family will have been trying to scrape together at least a first instalment.

Genuine abduction does occur occasionally, but only when the man knows that the girl's clan is weak and that her relatives will thus have difficulty in claiming their rights. He will take the girl as far away as possible. If he is caught, her relatives will try to demand a bride-price. Perhaps he is already tired of the girl by then and wants to return her. She is the clan's property and is not being returned un-
583 damaged, so the man must pay damages for seduction and,
565 if the girl is pregnant, also for childbirth.

614 In the lower classes that would dispose of the matter.
634 The baby would in any event be taken into the mother's clan and have her name. In the upper classes a girl would be turned out if she had had such an accident and the considerable damages required had not been paid immediately. The clan's prestige cannot be allowed to suffer.

Indian girls never keep a seducer's name secret, but at once tell their family who he is.

Among the lower classes cases of wives eloping are said to occur. The man to whom they have gone can legalize the position by paying compensation to the husband. If the husband agrees to do a deal, he cannot ask as much as the bride-price he himself paid, for the girl is by then less valuable.

580 It follows from all this that a woman has not the right to
583 dispose of her own body. She belongs to her mother's family until she marries, and her closest relatives must be compensated for any injury done her. Once the man has paid the bride-price she becomes his property. If she is
[768] widowed, she is inherited along with the rest of his effects by his nephews (sister's sons) and she has to purchase her freedom from them, paying a sum equivalent to the bride-price less what she is held to have lost in value since marriage.

8:Armstrong & Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948
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622 Chiefs are polygynous and have many daughters, for
595 whom very high bride prices are paid—sometimes thousands of animals,
583 worth $5,000 to $10,000. Such rich chiefs take great pride in their
556 daughters, dressing them in fine silken robes and necklaces of gold and pearls and providing them with personal servants.

567 There is a class of slaves who are beneath the chiefs' retainers in the social hierarchy. It consists of people born into this status and of captives.

PROPERTY

422 All cattle, though individually owned, belong in theory to the local group as a whole and are worked for the common benefit of all. For example, the cattle paid as a bride price when a girl marries within her own sib go to a new owner, but the milk, butter, cheese, and hides from them continue to be shared by everyone in the sib. When a woman receives cattle as a bride price for her daughter any new stock born to them belongs to the daughter's husband and his sons, and when the animals are rounded up for the annual branding each son is allowed to brand a certain number of them.

ETIQUETTE

576 The *Goajiro* are in general unfriendly to strangers but have a well-
577 established code of hospitality. Strangers calling at a house must wait until invited in. Inside a house a bowl of chicha or rum (coffee when available) is the first gift offered the visitor, who is thereafter given a hammock and treated as a member of the family. A special feast may
545 be arranged if there are many guests. A guest of high rank is feasted, and some of the young girls of the house may be placed at his disposal.

LAW AND ORDER

627 The chiefs have little power outside their own local group, where they settle minor disputes. The solution of many disputes and transgressions of custom are left to the parties concerned. The laws of group respon-
628 sibility and group retaliation lead to frequent intertribal feuds. A person
614 without a strong sib to protect him is helpless, for others may use any act which may conceivably be interpreted as harmful as pretext for demanding indemnity. For example, a person injured while intoxicated may demand payment from the person who sold him the rum, or a person injured by a borrowed animal may demand payment from the owner of the animal; a thief who hurts himself when trespassing on the property of his intended victim will demand compensation of him; and anyone aiding a sick or wounded person who subsequently dies incurs a liability.

672 If a person injures himself he must make an expiatory gift to the members of his own sib and a lesser gift to his father's relatives. If a child dies when under the care of one parent, this parent must reimburse

8:Armstrong & Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948
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water but is given an herbal purgative. Her hair is cut short. Generally several of her relatives stay around the door of the hut, and strangers and men with an eye to matrimony may look in. During this period the girl is taught the duties of married life and such skills as weaving, sewing, and making hammocks. When she emerges, stout and bleached, a special festival is held, when she resumes her ornaments and puts on the adult clothes that she has made during her confinement. She is now considered marriageable. The length of her confinement depends on her status, though theoretically it lasts until her hair again reaches the nape of her neck. Poor girls are secluded only a few weeks, rich girls up to 2 years.

Sexual life and marriage.—Little is known about the sexual life of the *Goajiro*. A certain amount of promiscuous love making occurs among the young people at the biweekly festivals. Dances also provide an opportunity for sexual advances.

There are some male transvestites who carry on only female activities and are ridiculed by the men.

When a man desires to marry he sends his father or uncle as intermediary, then pays a bride price which has been set by the girl's relatives. The payment is usually in cattle, but goats, pearls, liquor, cotton cloth, and gold ornaments also are used. The father retains the purchase price only when his first daughter marries; the income of subsequent marriages goes to the girl's senior maternal uncles. The mother also receives part of the income. A son obtains the cattle for the bride payment from the increase of his father's herds.

Intermarriage between the sibs is frequent, and many of the *Goajiro* give their daughters to "civilizados" from Maracaibo and Rio Hacha, who pay higher prices and find such a tie with the Indians useful in their trading relations.

The marriage ceremony consists of a series of feasts and exchanges of presents between the two families. The wedding night is spent at the rancheria of the bride's mother, but the nuptial hammock (specially woven by the female relatives of the bride) is hung from a tree some distance away from the house. For a period of days and even months the bridegroom leaves his bride at dawn and returns only after sunset. In this way the groom shows respect to his mother-in-law.

Polygyny is general. The number of wives depends on the economic status of the husband, some men having as many as 20. Each wife lives in her own house, where her husband occasionally visits her. The man, as head of the polygynous household, supervises the daily slaughter of animals and the distribution of meat and corn to each household according to the number of its members.

If a wife shirks her domestic duties she may be divorced and her husband may claim the return of the bride price cattle, plus their increase and

8:Armstrong & Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948
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536 minus an amount considered equivalent for the sexual right he had exer-
Barc cised. If a woman dies in her first childbirth the husband may demand
172 the full return of the bride price (Simons, 1885, p. 792, however, states
●585 that the wife's relatives demand compensation from the husband).
586 Adultery entails divorce with full return of the bride price. It rarely
587 occurs, however, as the wife will be treated badly by her own relatives.
At his death a man's wives are inherited by his brother, and next by his
587 sister's sons; the women may avoid this by making a payment equivalent
768 to their bride price. If he is of the Catholic faith his children may claim
189 to be his legal heirs, which leads to conflict with the maternal nephews.
(See Social Organization, p. 374.)

562 The influence of women in political affairs is sometimes noticeable.
622 There are cases of female chiefs, and women are respected enough so
as to be able to intervene and stop brawls.

764 **Death.**—Funerals are accompanied by festivities which last days or even
[illegible] weeks, according to the wealth of the family. There are some differences
[illegible] in the funeral ceremonies which are apparently associated with the par-
[illegible] ticular site. These funeral feasts afford the best opportunity for display
of wealth, and more than 1,000 head of livestock may be butchered.
Every mourner who comes to the feast contributes animals for slaughter
and continues to do so as long as he cares to remain. After the mourning
period, marked by weeping and lamenting interspersed with drinking and
feasting, the corpse, which has lain in a hammock slung from the rafters,
[illegible] is sewn up in hides by the women (men may not touch a dead body)
and carried to the cemetery of the tribe. For a year or so, the body may
be temporarily consigned to a shallow grave marked by a pile of stones.
Food and drink are often placed in the grave, and, if the deceased had been
a warrior, his bows and arrows are put in. A year or two later the bones
768 are exhumed and reburied in a large urn. The exhumation is generally
765 done at night and is accompanied by a feast. The remains are carried in
a funeral procession to the dead person's birthplace, where they are
buried in the family's own cemetery. The funeral urn is placed in a
vertical position with the narrow neck of the jar protruding above ground
to permit the free entry and exit of the spirit and to allow the remains of
other members of the family to be added from time to time. A cactus
hedge surrounds the cemetery, and in wet weather half a calabash is
placed over the opening of each jar to keep out the rain. Whenever two
relatives of a recently deceased person meet, they bow to the ground,
shouting and groaning, for several minutes. (*For a slightly different*
account of the burial of a rich man, see Simons, 1885, p. 792.)

751 If a person is stricken with smallpox the whole tribe moves away, only
184 the family of the sick person remaining. When the death occurs they
bury the body below the floor and burn the hut over the grave.

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159 554 office expired (in two years time) he sought and obtained a position in the Federal Ministry of Public Works in a project which was seeking the best places to drill water wells all over the Guajira peninsula. He held this job for about a year and half. He is now employed in the Guajira office, in Paraguaipoa, of the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry and is "ad honorem" agent of the Comisión Indigenista in the Guajira. In these two jobs he gets paid only when he performs certain work, such as when he recently acted as guide and interpreter for the present writer.

159 554 583 614 585 During his term as Prefect of Paez (Sinamaica) he married, according to the Guajira tradition and law, one of the daughters of To'olito Fernandez, for whom he had to pay a very high price, as the girl was the daughter of an important chief. Following Guajira law the price for the bride was gathered among the members of the Uriana clan to which Perez belongs due to his mother's heritage. Incidentally, as Fernandez also belongs to the Uriana clan he had to contribute in the collection of the bride-price of his own daughter although, of course, the amount collected did not go to him but to the girl's maternal uncle. This was a typical exogamous marriage as the girl belongs to the [595] Guajariyú clan, that being her mother's clan. At present, Perez keeps two households, one in Maracaibo with his white wife and son, whom he visits once or twice a week, if he is not doing any special work for the ministries; the other, is his native household at the Laguna del Pajaro, Guajira, where he remains most of his time. He has had no children with his Indian wife. His two simultaneous marriages have brought him no trouble with the law, as according to Guajiro tradition polygyny is perfectly acceptable, and according to Venezuelan law he has only one legitimate wife.

159 595 It is interesting to note at this point that Perez denies having a white wife in Maracaibo, although he does not deny having the son and shows pride in saying that his son is in medical school. The present writer was not able to fathom the reasons behind this denial. Data regarding his Maracaibo marriage was obtained from Perez's father who was also unable to furnish good motives for the fact that Perez tries to hide that he has a household in that city. To test this point the writer, after the